

The Communication Philosophy of the Basiacuong Tradition in Ocu Language Expressions as an Ethnolinguistic Study

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Abstract: The Basiacuong tradition is one of the oral cultural heritages of the Kampar (Ocu) people in Riau, which is rich in philosophical, ethical, and religious values. This study aims to analyze the expressions in the Ocu language that appear in Basiacuong practices using an ethnolinguistic approach. The research data were obtained through audiovisual observations of Basiacuong videos published in digital media, then transcribed and translated into Indonesian. The analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994) through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate the existence of eight main utterances that include proverbs, traditional pantun, advice, religious expressions, and social and philosophical expressions. These utterances function to instill moral values, strengthen social ethics, entertain, and legitimize customs through Islamic teachings. This study confirms that the Basiacuong tradition is not merely an oral performance, but a means of inheriting cultural identity and an educational medium that remains relevant in maintaining social harmony in the Kampar community.

Keywords: Basiacuong; Ethnolinguistics; Ocu Language; Philosophy Of Communication; Proverbs

1. Introduction

Language is a tool for expressing speech that is intended to be conveyed to others. Language also serves as a means of conveying information, seeking information, and obtaining news (Pratiwi et al., 2025). This is in accordance with the opinion of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, who through the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, stated that language shapes the mindset and perception of reality of its community. In addition to being a communication tool, the role of language in life is also very important, namely as a symbol of the cultural identity of a community group. Cultural identity refers to a collection of norms, values, and practices that distinguish one group from another (Risqiyah et al., 2025). The philosophy of communication views that communication is not merely a process of exchanging messages, but a means to instill values, build social relations, and maintain the balance of life together. In oral tradition, every speech has a deeper meaning than the message that appears on the surface, because it contains a view of life, customary norms, and local wisdom of the community. In this way, the Basiacuong tradition becomes not only entertainment or traditional conversation, but also a reflection of the Ocu people's life philosophy which is passed down from generation to generation.

One of the regions with a distinctive culture is the Kampar (ocu) community in Riau. Kampar is a regency in Riau province that has a rich culture. One of the oral cultures and traditions in Kampar Regency is Basiacuong. The Basiacuong tradition in Kampar is a traditional communication practice rich in meaning, philosophy, and symbols that has been passed down from generation to generation by the Ocu people. The language used in this tradition is Kampar, also known as Ocu. This language is in the Malay family (Malayic) and is often considered a dialect of Riau Malay, with strong influences from the Minangkabau language (Sari & Yasnel, 2025).

Siacuong comes from the term "*sanjung-menyanjung*" (*praise and praise*) that is carried out between one party and another, usually through the intermediary of a tribe's chief or someone of a certain status who is given the opportunity to speak. The verb form of Siacuong is known locally as Basiacuong, which means to do something intentionally. This tradition is also known as *Sisombau* or *Basisobau* (Yunus, 2013) *Basisombau* is a tradition of indirectly conveying

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ideas and advice in beautiful language through dialogues of proverbs and pantuns between the *ninik mamak* (leaders). *Basiacuong* is typically performed at traditional ceremonies such as engagements, weddings, feasts, and the coronation of the *ninik mamak*. *Basiacuong* itself is a cultural heritage that enriches Riau's traditional heritage, standing alongside *randai*, *hikayat*, and other oral arts.

The *Basiacuong* tradition is relevant to analysis through ethnolinguistics, a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and culture. Ethnolinguistics emphasizes that every language contains values, symbols, and worldviews unique to its community. Therefore, the Ocu expressions in *Basiacuong* are not only beautiful utterances, but also represent the value system, customary norms, and communication philosophy of the Kampar community. Ethnolinguistic studies are important for exploring the symbolic meanings in these expressions and understanding how language serves as a means of cultural inheritance and collective identity. Sari and Yasnel (2025) state that the Ocu language has a close kinship with the Minangkabau language, but still maintains its own distinctive characteristics reflected in oral traditions such as *Basiacuong*. In addition, Yarna (2018) found that *Basiacuong* is rich in educational values, moral advice, and social functions that strengthen community solidarity. Therefore, through an ethnolinguistic approach, researchers can explore the symbolic meaning of proverbs, pantuns, and the language styles used, as well as understand how this tradition is a means of inheriting the culture and collective identity of the Kampar people.

Based on the description above, the author chose the title "Communication Philosophy of the *Basiacuong* Tradition in Ocu Language Expressions as an Ethnolinguistic Study" with several underlying considerations. *First*, studies on the philosophy of communication in the *Basiacuong* tradition are still very limited, although research such as that conducted by Apriyanti & Sukenti (2023) has revealed the structure, genre, and moral messages in *Basiacuong* in Batu Belah. This focus has not specifically explained the philosophy of communication in Ocu language expressions. *Second*, ethnolinguistic research on the Ocu language is also still minimal, for example, the *Basiacuong* Tradition of Koto Tibun Village by Yarna (2018) shows social, cultural, and symbolic capital in *Basiacuong*, but does not discuss the community's perception of traditional expressions from a deep philosophical perspective. *Third*, the sustainability of the *Basiacuong* tradition faces real challenges due to modernization, research such as that conducted by Rahman et al. (2024) showed that although *Basiacuong* is still practiced in the Koto Perambangan Village community, its practice and delivery contain elements of adaptation to the modern era, there is not much research that examines the strategy for preserving the communication philosophy contained in this tradition. Thus, a research gap arises because there has not been a study that combines the communication philosophy, Ocu language expressions, and the *Basiacuong* oral tradition within a comprehensive ethnolinguistic framework. This study is expected to be able to show how the communication philosophy in the *Basiacuong* tradition not only strengthens the cultural identity of the Ocu community but also makes a real contribution to efforts to preserve intangible cultural heritage through an ethnolinguistic approach.

2. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with ethnolinguistic methods to examine the philosophical meaning of the *Basiacuong* tradition through the Ocu language. The primary data source was taken from videos of the *Basiacuong* procession uploaded to YouTube, then selected based on quality, event context, and completeness of the speech. The selected videos were transcribed and translated into Indonesian for easier analysis. The primary data consisted of speeches, proverbs, pantuns, and expressions in the Ocu language, while supporting data were obtained from books, articles, and previous research. The analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994) which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. To maintain the validity of the results, this study used source triangulation by comparing several videos and theoretical triangulation by linking the findings to ethnolinguistic studies, communication philosophy, and previous studies.

3. Result and Discussion

Based on the transcription of two video clips of the Basiacuong tradition from the YouTube channels Rahmi Muliani and UJ Riau Channel, eight important utterances in the Ocu language were found, each with philosophical, social, religious, and aesthetic significance. This data can be summarized in the following table.

Tabel 1. Analisis Bahasa Ocu.

No	Ocu Language (Spoken Language)	Indonesian translation	Category	Function
1	<i>Pinang baik dimakan, Ayu diminumkan</i>	Sesuatu yang baik digunakan dengan bijak	Proverb	Giving moral direction
2	<i>Contoh indahnya bila uang contoh pantun ini kok pandai</i>	Keindahan muncul bila pantun disampaikan dengan baik	Traditional pantun	Aesthetics, entertainment, education
3	<i>Kami mulai dengan Bismillahirrahmanirrahim</i>	Memulai dengan menyebut nama Allah	Religious expressions	Legitimization of customs through Islam
4	<i>Kalau awak tengok pinggang ala diejek boleh alay</i>	Kalau engkau melihat pinggang seseorang lalu mengejeknya, itu bisa menyinggung perasaan (alay)	Social expressions	Maintaining communication ethics
5	<i>Sasobik bunyi di imbago dan donikmat kan mendatangkan rezeki</i>	Jika segala sesuatu berbunyi atau berjalan sesuai aturan (<i>imbago</i>) dan dinikmati dengan rasa syukur, maka akan mendatangkan rezeki	Traditional advice / philosophical expression	Teaching order in life
6	<i>Sedangkan hidupmu tak limbago, kayu mojang dan tubuh kita batang kasih yang pantau datang</i>	Jika hidupmu tidak berlandaskan adat (<i>limbago</i>), maka hidup itu akan rapuh, ibarat kayu muda dan tubuh yang hanya bertumpu pada kasih yang sementara datang	Philosophical proverb	The importance of rules (<i>limbago</i>)
7	<i>Mamaku menyampaikan pada uang semondo</i>	Mamaku menyampaikan pada pihak semondo (sanak/keluarga sebelah)	Reference to the role of Ninik Mamak / parents conveying messages.	Advice / Customary communication function
8	<i>Bagaikan bergalah Datuok ke hulu, berdayung pula ke hilir untuk mufakat. 'Iya' dilepas Datuok berjalan. Sampai di sini kata disebabkan kepada Datuok</i>	Seperti orang bergalah ke hulu dan berdayung ke hilir, semua dilakukan untuk mencapai mufakat. Setelah kesepakatan diucapkan 'iya', maka pemimpin adat (Datuok) berjalan. Sampai di titik ini, kata-kata diserahkan kepada Datuok.	Traditional proverbs and philosophical expressions	The importance of consensus in custom.

These utterances include proverbs, traditional pantun (pantun), advice, religious expressions, and social and humorous expressions that strengthen communication within the tradition. Each utterance has a specific function in maintaining social norms, instilling

moral values, entertaining, and strengthening the religious identity of the Kampar community. The following table discusses the above.

The first utterance, "Pinang baik dimakan, Ayu diminumkan," is a proverb that teaches that everything good must be used according to its function and placed in the right place. In the context of Basiacuong, this proverb is conveyed to remind participants to position themselves and their actions according to customary norms and social ethics. The moral function of this utterance is to instill a wise attitude in utilizing resources, avoiding greed, and respecting inherited traditional values. Syam's (2007) research shows that Malay proverbs serve as a medium for character education, and this Ocu utterance demonstrates the continuity of these principles in the lives of the Kampar community, where social norms and moral responsibility are highly respected.

Traditional pantun appears in the utterance "Contoh indahnyanya kalau uang contoh pantun ini kok pintar" and its variation "Contoh indahnyanya kalau uang contoh pantun ini kok pintar, semua bola-bola lagi pagi Bojonggede". This utterance is an entertainment pantun that has both aesthetic and social functions. Pantun not only serves to beautify language, but also educates event participants through implicit moral messages, as well as strengthens social interaction. Handayani (2022) emphasizes that Malay pantun has a dual function: as entertainment and a medium for character education. In the Basiacuong tradition, Ocu pantun is delivered with a humorous rhythm and wordplay so as to lighten the atmosphere, build togetherness, and keep social interactions lively and enjoyable. This type of pantun demonstrates the flexibility of oral tradition, where entertainment and social education can go hand in hand without compromising customary norms.

Religious expressions are present in the utterance "Kami mulai dengan Bismillahirrahmanirrahim." This utterance is used to open traditional rituals and emphasizes that all activities are carried out in the name of Allah. Its religious function is to provide spiritual legitimacy to the ritual and maintain harmony between custom and Islam. This aligns with the principle of "custom is based on syarak, syarak is based on the Book of Allah" as noted in the Tambusai Education Journal (2023), which shows that the Basiacuong tradition integrates religious values into every stage of the event, strengthening both the spiritual identity and the social values of the participants.

In the social realm, the utterance "Kalau awak tengok pinggang ala diejek boleh alay" reminds participants to maintain politeness and etiquette in interactions. This expression falls into the category of social expressions that serve to maintain harmony among community members. Syahrin (2021) emphasized that politeness is a hallmark of Malay traditional communication in Sumatra, and this Ocu expression demonstrates how norms of politeness are internalized through spoken language to maintain harmonious interactions and prevent conflict.

Traditional advice is evident in the saying "Sasobik bunyi di imbago dan donikmat kan mendatangkan rezeki" This utterance teaches that order (imbago) and gratitude will bring blessings and fortune. Its educational function is to instill philosophical values of life, promote order, and teach respect for customary rules. Faishal (2024) found that advice in Kampar society is always associated with the principles of order and blessings, so this utterance has both a moral and religious function, emphasizing the importance of gratitude and order in daily life.

Another philosophical proverb is found in the saying, "Sedangkan hidupmu tak limbago, kayu mojang dan tubuh kita batang kasih yang pantau datang," which symbolizes the importance of customary rules (limbago). This proverb suggests that life without rules will be fragile, like wood without direction. Its philosophical function is to provide an understanding that customary rules are the pillars of social and moral support for the Kampar community. Fitriyanti (2022) explains that limbago is the foundation of Kampar community life, making this proverb an instrument for raising awareness of the importance of social order and adherence to customary norms.

The utterance "Mamaku menyampaikan pada uang semondo" implies that a mother's role is to convey a message or request to an authority or traditional structure called the money semondo. This utterance falls into the category of advice or traditional messages and serves as a formal means of communication in the Basiacuong tradition. This message emphasizes the importance of social hierarchy and respect for traditional structures, while also demonstrating the role of women as social mediators. Handayani (2022) emphasized that in Malay society, women often serve as guardians of social values through oral

communication, so this Ocu utterance reflects a social practice that strengthens traditional structures and maintains the continuity of tradition.

The saying "Bagaikan bergalah Datuok ke hulu, berdayung pula ke hilir untuk mufakat. 'Iya' dilepas Datuok berjalan. Sampai di sini kata disebarkan kepada Datuok" is a traditional proverb rich in philosophical meaning. This expression emphasizes the importance of togetherness and cooperation in reaching a consensus, likening it to a pole going upstream and rowing downstream, which both require unity even though they go in different directions. Once an agreement is reached, the customary decision is entirely handed over to the leader, the Datuok, who symbolizes collective authority and wisdom. This saying not only affirms the traditional democratic values vibrant in Kampar society but also demonstrates the legitimacy of customary rules (*limbago*) as a basis for decision-making. In line with research by Syam (2007) and Fitriyanti (2022), proverbs like this function to maintain social harmony, strengthen the deliberation system, and strengthen the role of customary language as a communication medium that maintains the values of togetherness and respect for customary leaders.

4. Conclusion

The expressions in the Kampar community's Basiacuong tradition contain profound philosophical meanings. Each utterance not only has a communicative function, but is also loaded with moral, religious, social, and aesthetic values. Proverbs serve as a medium for character education and reinforcement of customary norms; pantuns present beauty as well as educational entertainment; religious expressions emphasize the close relationship between custom and sharia; while advice and philosophical expressions strengthen collective awareness of the importance of order (*limbago*) in community life. The overall analysis shows that Basiacuong is a complex form of traditional communication, in which the Ocu language serves as a medium for cultural inheritance and identity. Therefore, preserving this tradition is important, not only as an expression of oral art, but also as a means of building social harmony and strengthening the communication philosophy of the Kampar community amidst the current of modernization.

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